



DELHI UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY

THE GIFT OF  
THE FORD FOUNDATION





The Shelley Society's Publications.

SECOND SERIES. No. 1

---

# ADONAIŠ

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Edited

*WITH A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION*

BY

THOMAS J WISE

LONDON 1886

PUBLISHED FOR THE SHELLEY SOCIETY

BY REEVES AND TURNER 196 STRAND

---

AMS PRESS

NEW YORK



# ADONAIS

An Elegy on the Death of John Keats

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

FIRST PRINTED

AT PISA WITH THE TYPES OF DIDOT IN 1821

AND NOW REPRINTED IN EXACT FAC-SIMILE

**Edited**

*WITH A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION*

BY

THOMAS J WISE

**London**

PUBLISHED FOR THE SHELLEY SOCIETY

BY REEVES AND TURNER 196 STRAND

1886

**Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data**

**Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 1792-1822.**

**Adonais: an elegy on the death of John Keats.**

Reprint of the 1886 ed. published by Reeves and Turner, London, which was issued as 2d ser., no. 1, of the Shelley Society's publications.

1. Keats, John, 1795-1821, in fiction, drama, poetry, etc.  
I. Wise, Thomas James, 1859-1937, ed. II. Title. III. Series:  
Shelley Society, London. Publications; 2d ser., no. 1.  
PR5428.L6 1975, 2d ser., no. 1 [PR5406] 821'.7s  
ISBN 0-404-11503-9 [821'.7] 74-30284

Reprinted from the edition of 1886, London  
First AMS edition published, 1975

International Standard Book Number:  
Complete Set: 0-404-11500-4  
Second Series, No. 1: 0-404-11503-9

AMS PRESS, INC.  
New York, N.Y. 10003

## INTRODUCTION.





## INTRODUCTION.

---

IT is not proposed on the present occasion to enter upon any criticism of Shelley's great Elegy,—the poem which among the generality of educated readers is more highly prized than any other work of the Poet. But it will be useful to bring together the leading facts in the bibliography of *Adonais*, and the more important of the references to that poem to be gathered from Shelley's published letters.

Under date June the 8th, 1821, Shelley wrote to Mr. Charles Ollier, from Pisa, the following letter, which is given in the *Shelley Memorials*—1859—pp. 155, 156:—

“DEAR SIR,—You may announce for publication a poem entitled *Adonais*. It is a lament on the death of poor Keats, with some interposed stabs on the assassins of his peace and of his fame; and will be preceded by a criticism<sup>1</sup> on *Hyperion*, asserting the due claims which that fragment gives him to the rank which I have assigned him. My poem is finished, and

---

<sup>1</sup> It would seem from this passage, that he at first meant the original edition to include a criticism, whether printed at Pisa or in London.

consists of about forty Spenser stanzas.<sup>1</sup> I shall send it you, either printed at Pisa, or transcribed in such a manner as it shall be difficult for the reviser to leave such errors as *assist* the obscurity of the *Prometheus*. But, in case I send it printed, it will be merely that mistakes may be avoided ; [so] that I shall only have a few copies struck off in the cheapest manner.

"If you have interest enough in the subject, I could wish that you inquired of some of the friends and relations of Keats respecting the circumstances of his death, and could transmit me any information you may be able to collect, and especially as to the degree in which, as I am assured, the brutal attack in the *Quarterly Review* excited the disease by which he perished.<sup>2</sup>

"I have received no answer to my last letter to you. Have you received my contribution<sup>3</sup> to your Magazine ?<sup>4</sup>

"Dear Sir,

"Yours very sincerely,

"P. B. SHELLEY."

Shelley speedily decided which course to follow, and put his *Elegy* to press at Pisa, where it was 'printed with the types of

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact it consists of *fifty-five* stanzas ; so that its author must have again varied and enlarged his plan after the first draft of the poem was completed.

<sup>2</sup> This passage proves very plainly how little knowledge Shelley really had of the facts of the case when composing *Adonais*. Had he, before committing his work to press, waited to inquire how far the accounts communicated to him \* were correct in their details, he would doubtless have modified in a very considerable degree the measure of wrath he poured upon the hostile reviewers ; although, after all he had himself suffered at the hands of 'these wretched men,' it is unlikely he would have let slip altogether the opportunity thus presented of showing them the full extent of his antipathy and disregard.

\* [By 'a friend who had derived his information from Colonel Finch.' See a letter to Severn—dated 'Pisa, Nov. 29th, 1821,'—in Lord Houghton's *Life, Letters, and Literary Remains, of John Keats*. Moxon, 1848, vol. ii., p. 101. Given also by Mr. Buxton Forman in his Library edition of *Shelley's Works*, 1880, vol. iii., p. 8.]

<sup>3</sup> *A Defence of Poetry*, designed for 'an antidote to' Peacock's *The Four Ages of Poetry*. For a full account of this essay, see *Shelley's Works*, Forman's edition, 1880, vol. vii., p. 98.

<sup>4</sup> Ollier's *Literary Miscellany*.

Didot.' The result was the very sightly quarto, of which the present is as exact a reproduction as the Society can obtain. Its collation is—

Adonais / an Elegy on the death of John Keats, /  
author of Endymion, Hyperion etc. / By / Percy.  
B. Shelley / \*\*\*\*<sup>1</sup> / Pisa / with the types of Didot /  
/ MCCCCXXI.

Small quarto; pp. i—v (of which pp. iii—v. form the preface); and pp. 7—25 of text.

It was issued in blue paper wrappers, with woodcut and ornamental border.

The quarto was offered for sale at the price of 3s. 6d., and was obtainable for this by no means extravagant sum at least as late as 1824 (and most probably for some time afterwards), for the '*List of Mr. Shelley's Previous Works, which may be had of the Publishers of the "Posthumous Poems,"*' printed at the back of the list of errata for that volume, includes '*Adonais*, 4to, sewed, 3s. 6d.' Now the pamphlet is one of the scarcest and most highly prized of the original editions of Shelley's works.

The first *English* edition of *Adonais* was printed at Cambridge in 1829 at the instance of Lord Houghton and Arthur Hallam, and was edited from a copy of the original Pisa edition brought by the latter from Italy.

---

<sup>1</sup> Here stands a quotation from Plato.

The collation of the Cambridge edition is—

Adonais. / An Elegy / on the / Death of John  
Keats, / author of Endymion, Hyperion, etc. / By  
/ Percy B. Shelley. / \*\*\*\*<sup>1</sup> / Cambridge : / printed  
by W. Metcalfe, / and sold by Messrs. Gee and  
Bridges, Market-Hill. / MDCCCXXIX.

Octavo ; pp. i—viii (of which pp. v—viii. form the  
preface); and pp. 1—28 of text.<sup>2</sup>

The book was issued in paper wrappers (without either  
ornamentation or lettering), which in some copies are Blue and  
in others Green.

The following notice is printed on a blank leaf, which counts  
as pp. 3—4 :—

“The present Edition is an exact reprint (a few  
typographical errors only being corrected) of the first  
édition of the ‘*Adonais*,’—dated ‘Pisa, with the types  
of Didot, mdcccxxi.’ ”

I have not been able to ascertain definitely what was the  
published price of this pamphlet ; no figure is printed on it, and  
no advertisement offering it for sale has come before me, but I  
have fair reason for believing that it was originally offered at  
Eighteenpence. Whether the issue was a large or small one  
there are no definite means of ascertaining, but so far as actual  
*scarcity* goes, fewer copies of it than of the Pisa edition certainly  
come into the market.

<sup>1</sup> Here stands the quotation from Plato.

<sup>2</sup> A *fac-simile* of the title-page will be found at the close of this introduction.

Not until 1876 was Shelley's wish for a London edition of his *Elegy* fulfilled. In that year Mr. H. Buxton Forman issued for private circulation<sup>1</sup> an edition of the *Adonais*, edited by himself with Notes and a brief Introduction. The title-page is a reproduction of the original quarto, and the collation is as follows:—

Octavo; pp. 1—8 (of which p. 2 contains the editor's Introduction, and pp. 5—8 Shelley's Preface); and pp. 9—29 of text.

These three are the only separate editions—in *English*—of the *Adonais* with which I am acquainted. The *Elegy* was, however, printed in *The Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review*<sup>2</sup> of Saturday, December the 1st, 1821, where it occupies pp. 751—754. The poem (which forms the opening article of the number) was preceded by the following editorial note:—

'Through the kindness of a friend, we have been favoured with the latest production of a gentleman of no ordinary genius, Mr. Bysshe Shelley. It is an elegy on the death of a youthful poet of considerable promise, Mr. Keats, and was printed at Pisa. As the copy now before us is, perhaps, the only one that has reached England, and the subject is one that will excite much interest, we shall print the whole of it.'

I have not myself collated the text as given in *The Literary Chronicle*, but Mr. Buxton Forman informs me that the promise

<sup>1</sup> The number of copies printed was limited, *five* being upon vellum, *twenty-five* upon Whatman's hand-made paper, and *fifty* upon ordinary paper. Facing the title-page of the vellum and Whatman paper copies is placed an etching of "Shelley's Grave" by W. B. Scott.

<sup>2</sup> No. 133, quarto. Published by J. Limbird, 355, Strand.

to 'print the whole of it' was not fulfilled, six stanzas (19—24) being omitted. It has since appeared in every edition of Shelley's Poetical Works, and is also included—either in whole or in part—in most volumes of Selections from his poetry.

It is interesting to find that so soon as 1830 Shelley's works must have been receiving considerable attention from educated Italians; for in that year appeared a neat and well-printed volume, of which the collation is as follows:—

Adone / Nella Morte / di / Giovanni Keats /  
Autore dell' Endimione, Iperione, &c. &c. &c. /  
Elegia / di / Percy Bishe Shelley / tradotta / da /  
L. A. Damaso Pareto. / \*\*\*\*<sup>1</sup> / Genova / dalla tipo-  
grafia Pellas. / MDCCCXXX.

Small quarto; pp. 1—74.

Pp. 5—35 are occupied by a "Disgorso / sulla vita  
e'sulle poesie / di / Percy Bishe Shelley."

The translation of the *Adonais* itself forms pp. 41—74.

No student of *Adonais* can afford to pass over the collection of Fragments—both of the Poem and of the Preface—deciphered by Dr. Garnett in 1862 during the course of his fruitful search amongst the Shelley Manuscripts preserved at Boscombe Manor. They were first given in the *Relics of Shelley* (Moxon, 1862; pp. 48—52), from which volume they are reprinted verbatim at the end of this Introduction.

---

<sup>1</sup> Here stands the following quotation:—

' . . . Sequiturque patrem non passibus sequis.'

VIRGILIO.

With regard to the *text* of the first—Pisa—edition of *Adonais*, I think we may fairly accord to it the honour of being less corrupt than that of the original editions of any of Shelley's books. Its verbal inaccuracies are few, and—comparatively speaking—of no importance.<sup>1</sup> Nor is this surprising when we consider the care which, as we learn from his published letters, Shelley bestowed upon both its composition and its correction. There are, however, *three* important variations from the reading of the first edition of 1821 which are unhesitatingly accepted even by such jealous editors as Messrs. Rossetti and Forman, both of whom incorporate them in the text of their respective editions. They were introduced by Mrs. Shelley in her 4 vol. edition of 1839, and as there seems no reason for doubting that she had authority for the changes, it is well, I think, to note them here.

In stanza viii. the last line originally stood thus :—

“(and the law)  
Of mortal change, shall fill the grave which is her maw.”

As given by Mrs. Shelley it reads :—

“Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.”

In stanza xvi. line *eight* originally ran thus :—

“Amid the drooping comrades of their youth.”

In Mrs. Shelley's revision we find :—

“Amid the faint companions of their youth.”

<sup>1</sup> With a single exception—that of the pronoun *their* being misspelt *thier*, in the second line of Stanza XLV,—these inaccuracies are confined to the pointing.



Again, in the quarto the last line of stanza xxviii. is :—

“They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them as they go.”

As printed by Mrs. Shelley it is :—

“They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.”

In connexion with the subject of Text, there is a singular coincidence which I do not remember to have seen pointed out elsewhere, and which well deserves noting specially.

Lines *four* and *five* of the nineteenth stanza of *Adonais* are as follows :—

“From the great morning of the world when first  
God dawned on Chaos,” &c.

If we turn to *Hellas*, printed in the following year (1822), we find the same thought reproduced in words which are almost identical :—

“In the great morning of the world,  
The spirit of God with might unfurl’d  
The flag of Freedom over Chaos,” &c.—

*Hellas*, page 5, lines 13—15.

The sad story of the death of John Keats, and the deep and lasting impression which that event made upon Shelley, are too well known to need repeating here ; they have been amplified abundantly—if not to excess—in the many biographical works, and articles of a biographical nature contributed to periodical literature, relating to either poet, which have already been given to the world. But it may, perhaps, be well to add a word or two in reference to the *date* of production of *Adonais*.

Keats died on the 23rd of February, 1821 ; and full three months elapsed before Shelley projected the composition of a poem in commemoration of his untimely end, or at all events

before he put such project into actual execution. In a letter to Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne, dated '*Bagni, Tuesday Evening, (June 5th, 1821.)*,' he wrote:—<sup>1</sup>

"I have been engaged these last days in composing a poem on the death of Keats, which will shortly be finished; and I anticipate the pleasure of reading it to you, as some of the very few persons who will be interested in it and understand it. It is a highly-wrought *piece of art*, and perhaps better, in point of composition, than anything I have written."

Again, under date '*Pisa, Saturday, (June 16th, 1821.)*,' he wrote to John Gisborne:—<sup>2</sup>

"As it is, I have finished my Elegy; and this day I send it to the press at Pisa. You shall have a copy the moment it is completed. I think it will please you. I have dipped my pen in consuming fire for his [Keats'] destroyers; otherwise the style is clear and solemn."

These passages seem to imply that the composition of the poem extended over about a fortnight; and yet as we shall see by the following extract from another letter to the Gisbornes, dated '*Bagni, Friday night, (July 13th, 1821.)*,' it remained nearly a month—say twenty-seven days—in the printer's hands, unless indeed, Shelley failed to send it to the printer's on the 16th, which is scarcely probable in face of the very precise manner in which he wrote:—

"A thousand thanks for your maps; in return for which I send you the only copy of *Adonais* the printer has yet delivered."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> See *Essays, Letters from Abroad, &c.*, 1840, vol. ii. p. 293.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 296.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 298.

This—as Mr. Forman has pointed out<sup>1</sup>—is a considerable time for the production of so slight a book; and indicates pretty clearly what care Shelley must have devoted to its correction during its passage through the press. In fact *Adonais* evidently received from its author an amount of attention which we have ample reason for concluding he did not trouble himself to bestow upon the majority of his other books; excluding, of course, the labour entailed by the changing of *Laon and Cythna* into *The Revolt of Islam*, and the forming of portions of *Queen Mab* into *The Daemon of the World*.

I have yet to quote two short passages from Shelley's letters to Ollier—his London publisher—in which he states distinctly what place his *Elegy* occupied in his own opinion; an opinion which, considering the amount of critical acumen he undoubtedly possessed, we cannot entirely pass over or neglect. Under date '*Pisa, September 25th, 1821,*' he writes—<sup>2</sup>

"The *Adonais*, in spite of its mysticism, is the least imperfect of my compositions, and, as the image of my regret and honour for poor Keats, I wish it to be so. I shall write to you, probably, by next post on the subject of that poem, and should have sent the promised criticism for the second edition, had I not mislaid, and in vain sought for, the volume that contains *Hyperion*."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> See Shelley's *Works*, Forman's edition, 1880, vol. iii. p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Shelley Memorials*, 1859, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup> *Lamia, Isabella, &c.*, 1820. Is it possible that to the accidental mislaying of this volume we are to ascribe the loss of a second—London—edition of *Adonais*; an edition rendered invaluable, as it would beyond doubt have been, by the criticism with which Shelley purposed to preface it?

Again — under date ‘*Pisa, November 11th, 1821,*’ — he writes:—

“Do not forget my other questions. I am especially curious to hear the fate of *Adonais*. I confess I should be surprised if *that* poem were born to an immortality of oblivion.”<sup>1</sup>

Such is the history of Shelley’s masterpiece, so far as the facts connected with its production are known to me. Received upon its publication with the usual howl of ignorant derision with which critics of a certain school were wont to indulge themselves upon the appearance of a new work from Shelley’s pen,<sup>2</sup> it has lived to take its rightful place in the foremost rank of English Elegiac Verse (a position it can scarcely fail to hold), and to be known and loved by thousands of thoughtful and appreciative readers.

It only remains still to add, as a minor bibliographical detail which may prove of service to some collectors, that the exact dimensions of *uncut* copies of the two early editions of *Adonais* are—

Pisa, 1821, edition :  $10\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Cambridge, 1829, edition :  $8\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{5}{8}$  inches.

Of both pamphlets the British Museum possesses copies.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Shelley Memorials*, 1859, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> One reviewer, endowed with an amount of dulness somewhat beyond the average, ventured—in *The Literary Gazette, Saturday, December 8th, 1821*, p. 773—the egotistic and self-satisfied opinion that “The poetry of the work is *contemptible*—a mere collection of bloated words heaped on each other without order, harmony, or meaning ; the refuse of a schoolboy’s common-place book, full of the vulgarisms of pastoral poetry, yellow gems and blue stars, bright Phoebus and rosy-fingered Aurora ; and of this stuff is Keats’s wretched *Elegy* compiled.” What writer, be his mental perception ever so obtuse, would venture to-day to confess to an opinion at once so inappreciative and so absurd ?

To H. Buxton Forman, Esq., whose name is so well known in connexion with Shelley Bibliography, I have to return my heartiest thanks for the kind assistance he has rendered me in the compilation of these introductory notes.

THOMAS J. WISE.

127, DEVONSHIRE ROAD,  
HOLLOWAY, N.

FRAGMENTS OF THE *ADONAIS*.<sup>1</sup>

[AMONG Shelley's MSS. is a fair copy of the "Defence of Poetry," apparently damaged by sea-water, and illegible in many places. Being prepared for the printer, it is written on one side of the paper only; on the blank pages, but frequently undecipherable for the reason just indicated, are many passages intended for, but eventually omitted from, the preface to "Adonais." Their autobiographical value requires no comment.]

. . . The expression of my indignation and sympathy. I will allow myself a first and last word on the subject of calumny as it relates to me. As an author I have dared and invited censure. If I understand myself, I have written neither for profit nor for fame. I have employed my poetical compositions and publications simply as the instruments of that sympathy between myself and others which the ardent and unbounded love I cherished for my kind incited me to acquire. I expected all sorts of stupidity and insolent contempt from those . . .

. . . These compositions (excepting the tragedy of the "Cenci," which was written rather to try my powers, than to unburthen my full heart) are insufficiently . . . commendation than perhaps they deserve, even from their bitterest enemies; but they have not attained any corresponding popularity. As a man, I shrink from notice and regard; the ebb and flow of the world vexes me; I desire to be left in peace. Persecution, contumely, and calumny, have been heaped upon me in profuse measure; and domestic conspiracy and legal oppression have violated in my person the most sacred rights of nature and humanity. The bigot will say it was the recompence of my errors; the man of the world will call it the result of my imprudence; but never upon one head . . .

. . . Reviewers, with some rare exceptions, are a most stupid and malignant race. As a bankrupt thief turns thieftaker in

---

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from :—

*Relics of Shelley.* / Edited by / Richard Garnett. / London: / Edward Moxon & Co., Dover Street. / 1862. Small octavo, pp. i—xvi. and 1—191.

despair, so an unsuccessful author turns critic. But a young spirit panting for fame, doubtful of its powers, and certain only of its aspirations, is ill-qualified to assign its true value to the sneer of this world. He knows not that such stuff as this is of the abortive and monstrous births which time consumes as fast as it produces. He sees the truth and falsehood, the merits and demerits, of his case inextricably entangled. . . No personal offence should have drawn from me this public comment upon such stuff . . .

The offence of this poor victim\* seems to have consisted solely in his intimacy with Leigh Hunt, Mr. Hazlitt, and some other enemies of despotism and superstition. My friend Hunt has a very hard skull to crack, and will take a deal of killing. I do not know much of Mr. Hazlitt, but . . .

. . . I knew personally but little of Keats ; but on the news of his situation I wrote to him, suggesting the propriety of trying the Italian climate, and inviting him to join me. Unfortunately he did not allow me . . .

[Several cancelled passages of the "Adonais" have been met with in Shelley's notebooks. He appears to have originally framed his conception on a larger scale than he eventually found practicable. The passage in which the contemporary minstrels are introduced as mourning for Adonais, would have been considerably extended, and the characteristics of each delineated at some length. It must, however, have occurred to him that the parenthesis would be too long, and would tend to distract the reader's attention from the main subject. Nothing, therefore, of the original draft was allowed to subsist, but the four incomparable stanzas descriptive of himself ("Mid others of less note," &c.). A fifth was cancelled, which ran as follows :—]

And ever as he went he swept a lyre  
Of unaccustomed shape, and strings

\* It is hardly necessary to repeat what Mr. Milnes [Lord Houghton] has so clearly established, that Shelley very greatly overrated the effect which the Quarterly's<sup>1</sup> attack produced upon Keats. The error, however, was almost universal at the time.

---

<sup>1</sup> See *The Quarterly Review*, 1818, vol. xix., pp. 204-208. Review of '*Endymion: A Poetic Romance*, 1818.' A barbarous piece of writing, with the authorship of which Gifford is usually, and I think justly, charged.—T. J. W.

Now like the            of impetuous fire,  
 Which shakes the forest with its murmurings,  
 Now like the rush of the ærial wings  
 Of the enamoured wind among the treen,  
 Whispering unimaginable things,  
 And dying on the streams of dew serene,  
 Which feed the unmown meads with ever-during green.

[Several stanzas relating to Byron and Moore are too imperfect for publication.  
 The following refers to the latter :—]

And the green Paradise which western waves  
 Embosom in their ever-wailing sweep,  
 Talking of freedom to their tongueless caves,  
 Or to the spirits which within them keep  
 A record of the wrongs which, though they sleep,  
 Die not, but dream of retribution, heard  
 His hymns, and echoing them from steep to steep,  
 Kept—

---

[Leigh Hunt was thus described :—]

And then came one of sweet and earnest looks,  
 Whose soft smiles to his dark and night-like eyes  
 Were as the clear and ever-living brooks  
 Are to the obscure fountains whence they rise,  
 Showing how pure they are : a Paradise  
 Of happy truth upon his forehead low  
 Lay, making wisdom lovely, in the guise  
 Of earth-awakening morn upon the brow  
 Of star-deserted heaven, while ocean gleams below.

His song, though very sweet, was low and faint,  
 A simple strain——



[The following lines were also written for the "Adonais":—]<sup>1</sup>

A mighty Phantasm, half concealed  
In darkness of his own exceeding light,  
Which clothed his awful presence unrevealed,  
Charioted on the night  
Of thunder-smoke, whose skirts were chrysolite.

And like a sudden meteor, which outstrips  
The splendour-winged chariot of the sun,  
eclipse  
The armies of the golden stars, each one  
Pavilioned in its tent of light—all strewn  
Over the chasms of blue night——

<sup>1</sup> "Of this final fragment"—says Mr. Buxton Forman (Shelley's *Works*, 1880, vol. iii. p. 33)—"Mr. Garnett offers no explanation; but surely we may, without hesitation, connect the name of Samuel Taylor Coleridge with it. Considering the wholly ideal manner in which other poets are dealt with in *Adonais*, the expressions here used are not disproportionate when applied to Coleridge; and the passage corresponds closely with the lines in the *Letter to Maria Gisborne*:"

You will see Coleridge—he who sits obscure  
In the exceeding lustre, and the pure  
Intense irradiation of a mind,  
Which with its own internal lightning blind  
Flags wearily through darkness and despair  
—A cloud-encircled meteor of the air—  
A hooded eagle among blinking owls.—"

*Letter to Maria Gisborne*, lines 202—208.

Certainly this identification of the "mighty Phantasm" has been questioned; but I fail to see to whom else the description could possibly apply, and must record my own opinion as upholding that of Mr. Forman.—T. J. W.

# ADONAIΣ.

-o-o-

## An Elegy

ON THE

## DEATH OF JOHN KEATS,

AUTHOR OF ENDYMION, HYPERION, ETC

BY

PERCY B. SHELLEY

---

*'Αστηρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ἐνὶ ζωοῖσιν ἑῷος·*

*Νῦν δὲ θανῶν λάμπεις ἕσπερος ἐν φθιμένους.*

PLATO.

---

Cambridge :

PRINTED BY W. METCALFE,

AND SOLD BY MESSRS. GEE & BRIDGES, MARKET-HILL.

---

MDCCCXXIX.

---

Fac-simile of the Title-page of the first English edition of *Adonais*.  
The line round the above Title shows the size of the original page.

[Original size. 5-9/16 x 8-13/16. Reduced 15% for AMS edition]



# ADONAIIS

---

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS,  
AUTHOR OF ENDYMION, HYPERION ETC.

BY

PERCY. B. SHELLEY

*Ἀστήρ πρὶν μὲν ἑλαμπες ἐν ζῳοῖσιν ἔωος.*

*Νυν δὲ θανῶν, λαμπρὸς ἑσπερος ἐν φθίμενοισι.*

PLATO.

P I S A

WITH THE TYPES OF DIDOT

MDCCCXXI.



## P R E F A C E

---

Φάρμακον ἦλθε, Βίων, ποτι σον στομα, φάρμακον εἶδες·  
Πῶς τεν τοῖς χείλεσσι ποτεδραμε, κοῦκ εγλυκανθη;  
Τις δὲ βροτος τοσσοῦτον ἀνάμερος, ἢ κερασαι τοι,  
Ἥ δούναι λαλέοντι το φάρμακον; ἔκφυγεν ὦδαν.

MOSCHUS, BRITANN. BION.

It is my intention to subjoin to the London edition of this poem, a criticism upon the claims of its lamented object to be classed among the writers of the highest genius who have adorned our age. My known repugnance to the narrow principles of taste on which several of his earlier compositions were modelled, prove, at least that I am an impartial judge. I consider the fragment of Hyperion, as second to nothing that was ever produced by a writer of the same years.

John Keats, died at Rome of a consumption, in his twenty-fourth year, on the — of — 1821; and was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the protestants in that city, under the pyramid which is the tomb of Cestius, and the massy walls and towers, now mouldering and desolate, which formed the circuit of ancient Rome. The cemetery is an open space among the ruins covered in

winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place.

The genius of the lamented person to whose memory I have dedicated these unworthy verses, was not less delicate and fragile than it was beautiful ; and where cankerworms abound, what wonder, if it's young flower was blighted in the bud? The savage criticism on his *Endymion*, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind ; the agitation thus originated ended in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs ; a rapid consumption ensued, and the succeeding acknowledgements from more candid critics, of the true greatness of his powers, were ineffectual to heal the wound thus wantonly inflicted.

It may be well said, that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows, or one, like Keats's composed of more penetrable stuff. One of their associates, is, to my knowledge, a most base and unprincipled calumniator. As to "*Endymion*" ; was it a poem, whatever might be it's defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who had celebrated with various degrees of complacency and panegyric, "*Paris*," and "*Woman*", and a "*Syrian Tale*", and Mrs. Lefanu, and Mr. Barrett, and Mr. Howard Payne, and a long list of the illustrious obscure ? Are these the men, who in their venal good nature, presumed to draw a parallel between the Rev. Mr. Milman and Lord Byron ? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels ? Against what woman taken in adultery, dares the

foremost of these literary prostitutes to cast his opprobrious stone? Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God. Nor shall it be your excuse, that, murderer as you are, you have spoken daggers, but used none.

The circumstances of the closing scene of poor Keats's life were not made known to me until the *Elegy* was ready for the press. I am given to understand that the wound which his sensitive spirit had received from the criticism of *Endymion*, was exasperated by the bitter sense of unrequited benefits; the poor fellow seems to have been hooted from the stage of life, no less by those on whom he had wasted the promise of his genius, than those on whom he had lavished his fortune and his care. He was accompanied to Rome, and attended in his last illness by Mr. Severn, a young artist of the highest promise, who, I have been informed "almost risked his own life, and "sacrificed every prospect to unwearied attendance upon "his dying friend." Had I known these circumstances before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with a reward from "such stuff as dreams are made of." His conduct is a golden augury of the success of his future career—may the unextinguished Spirit of his illustrious friend animate the creations of his pencil, and plead against Oblivion for his name!





# ADONAI S.

---

## I.

I weep for Adonais — he is dead !  
O, weep for Adonais ! though our tears  
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head !  
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years  
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,  
And teach them thine own sorrow, say : with me  
Died Adonais ; till the Future dares  
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be  
An echo and a light unto eternity !

## II.

Where wert thou mighty Mother, when he lay,  
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies  
In darkness ? where was lorn Urania  
When Adonais died ? With veiled eyes,  
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise  
She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath,  
Rekindled all the fading melodies,  
With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,  
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of death.

## III.

O, weep for Adonais — he is dead !  
 Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep !  
 Yet wherefore ? Quench within their burning bed  
 Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep  
 Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep ;  
 For he is gone, where all things wise and fair  
 Descend ; — oh, dream not that the amorous Deep  
 Will yet restore him to the vital air ;  
 Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

## IV.

Most musical of mourners, weep again !  
 Lament anew, Urania ! — He died,  
 Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,  
 Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride,  
 The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,  
 Trampled and mocked with many a loathed rite  
 Of lust and blood ; he went, unterrified,  
 Into the gulf of death ; but his clear Sprite  
 Yet reigns o'er earth ; the third among the sons of light.

## V.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew !  
 Not all to that bright station dared to climb ;  
 And happier they their happiness who knew,  
 Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time  
 In which suns perished ; others more sublime,  
 Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,  
 Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime ;  
 And some yet live, treading the thorny road,  
 Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene abode.

## VI.

But now, thy youngest, dearest one, has perished  
 The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,  
 Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,  
 And fed with true love tears, instead of dew;  
 Most musical of mourners, weep anew!  
 Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,  
 The bloom, whose petals nipt before they blew  
 Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;  
 The broken lily lies — the storm is overpast.

## VII.

To that high Capital, where kingly Death  
 Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,  
 He came; and bought, with price of purest breath,  
 A grave among the eternal. — Come away!  
 Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day  
 Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still  
 He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;  
 Awake him not! surely he takes his fill  
 Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

## VIII.

He will awake no more, oh, never more! —  
 Within the twilight chamber spreads apace,  
 The shadow of white Death, and at the door  
 Invisible Corruption waits to trace  
 His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;  
 The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe  
 Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface  
 So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law  
 Of mortal change, shall fill the grave which is her maw.

## IX.

O, weep for Adonais! — The quick Dreams,  
 The passion-winged Ministers of thought,  
 Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams  
 Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught  
 The love which was its music, wander not, —  
 Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,  
 But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn their lot  
 Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,  
 They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

## X.

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,  
 And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries;  
 “ Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;  
 “ See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,  
 “ Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies  
 “ A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain.”  
 Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!  
 She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain  
 She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

## XI.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew  
 Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;  
 Another clipt her profuse locks, and threw  
 The wreath upon him, like an anadem,  
 Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;  
 Another in her wilful grief would break  
 Her bow and winged reeds, as if to stem  
 A greater loss with one which was more weak;  
 And dull the barbed fire against his frozen cheek.

## XII.

Another Splendour on his mouth alit,  
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw the breath  
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,  
And pass into the panting heart beneath  
With lightning and with music : the damp death  
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips ;  
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath  
Of moonlight vapour, which the cold night clips,  
It flushed through his pale limbs, and past to its eclipse.

## XIII.

And others came . . . Desires and Adorations,  
Winged Persuasions and veiled Destinies,  
Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations  
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies ;  
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,  
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam  
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,  
Came in slow pomp ; — the moving pomp might seem  
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

## XIV.

All he had loved, and moulded into thought,  
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet sound,  
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought  
Her eastern watchtower, and her hair unbound,  
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,  
Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day ;  
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,  
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,  
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

## XV.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,  
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,  
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,  
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,  
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day ;  
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear  
Than those for whose disdain she pined away  
Into a shadow of all sounds : — a drear  
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

## XVI.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down  
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,  
Or they dead leaves ; since her delight is flown  
For whom should she have waked the sullen year ?  
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear  
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both  
Thou Adonais : wan they stand and sere  
Amid the drooping comrades of their youth,  
With dew all turned to tears ; odour, to sighing ruth.

## XVII.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale  
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain ;  
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale  
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain  
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,  
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,  
As Albion wails for thee : the curse of Cain  
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,  
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest !

## XVIII.

Ah woe is me ! Winter is come and gone,  
But grief returns with the revolving year ;  
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone ;  
The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear ;  
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons' bier ;  
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,  
And build their mossy homes in field and brere ;  
And the green lizard, and the golden snake,  
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

## XIX.

Through wood and stream and field and hill and Ocean  
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst  
As it has ever done, with change and motion,  
From the great morning of the world when first  
God dawned on Chaos ; in its steam immersed  
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light ;  
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst ;  
Diffuse themselves ; and spend in love's delight,  
The beauty and the joy of their renewed might.

## XX.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit tender  
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath ;  
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour  
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death  
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath ;  
Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone which knows  
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath  
By sightless lightning ? — th' intense atom glows  
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.



## XXI.

Alas ! that all we loved of him should be,  
 But for our grief, as if it had not been,  
 And grief itself be mortal ! Woe is me !  
 Whence are we, and why are we ? of what scene  
 The actors or spectators ? Great and mean  
 Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.  
 As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,  
 Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,  
 Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow.

## XXII.

*He* will awake no more, oh, never more !  
 “ Wake thou,” cried Misery, “ childless Mother, rise  
 “ Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart’s core,  
 “ A wound more fierce than his with tears and sighs.”  
 And all the Dreams that watched Urania’s eyes,  
 And all the Echoes whom their sister’s song  
 Had held in holy silence, cried : “ Arise ! ”  
 Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,  
 From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendour sprung.

## XXIII.

She rose like an autumnal Night, that springs  
 Out of the East, and follows wild and drear  
 The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,  
 Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,  
 Had left the earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear  
 So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania ;  
 So saddened round her like an atmosphere  
 Of stormy mist ; so swept her on her way  
 Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

## XXIV.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,  
 Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,  
 And human hearts, which to her aery tread  
 Yielding not, wounded the invisible  
 Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell :  
 And barbed tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they  
 Rent the soft Form they never could repel,  
 Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,  
 Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

## XXV.

In the death chamber for a moment Death  
 Shamed by the presence of that living Might  
 Blushed to annihilation, and the breath  
 Revisited those lips, and life's pale light  
 Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.  
 " Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,  
 " As silent lightning leaves the starless night !  
 " Leave me not ! " cried Urania : her distress  
 Roused Death : Death rose and smiled, and met her vain caress

## XXVI.

" Stay yet awhile ! speak to me once again ;  
 " Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live ;  
 " And in my heartless breast and burning brain  
 " That word, that kiss shall all thoughts else survive,  
 " With food of saddest memory kept alive,  
 " Now thou art dead, as if it were a part  
 " Of thee, my Adonais ! I would give  
 " All that I am to be as thou now art !  
 " But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart !

## XXVII.

- " O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,  
 " Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men  
 " Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart  
 " Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?  
 " Defenceless as thou wert, oh where was then  
 " Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?  
 " Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when  
 " Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,  
 " The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

## XXVIII.

- " The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;  
 " The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;  
 " The vultures to the conqueror's banner true  
 " Who feed where Desolation first has fed,  
 " And whose wings rain contagion; — how they fled,  
 " When like Apollo, from his golden bow,  
 " The Pythian of the age one arrow sped  
 " And smiled! — The spoilers tempt no second blow,  
 " They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them as they go.

519061

## XXIX.

- " The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;  
 " He sets, and each ephemeral insect then  
 " Is gathered into death without a dawn,  
 " And the immortal stars awake again;  
 " So is it in the world of living men:  
 " A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight  
 " Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when  
 " It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light  
 " Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

## XXX.

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds came  
 Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;  
 The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame  
 Over his living head like Heaven is bent,  
 An early but enduring monument,  
 Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song  
 In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent  
 The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,  
 And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

## XXXI.

Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,  
 A phantom among men; companionless  
 As the last cloud of an expiring storm  
 Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,  
 Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,  
 Actæon-like, and now he fled astray  
 With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,  
 And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,  
 Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

## XXXII.

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift —  
 A Love in desolation masked; — a Power  
 Girt round with weakness; — it can scarce uplift  
 The weight of the superincumbent hour;  
 It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,  
 A breaking billow; — even whilst we speak  
 Is it not broken? On the withering flower  
 The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek  
 The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may break.

## XXXIII.

His head was bound with pansies overblown,  
 And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;  
 And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,  
 Round whose rude shaft dark ivy tresses grew  
 Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,  
 Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart  
 Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of that crew  
 He came the last, neglected and apart;  
 A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

## XXXIV.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan  
 Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle band  
 Who in another's fate now wept his own;  
 As in the accents of an unknown land,  
 He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned  
 The Stranger's mien, and murmured: "who art thou?"  
 He answered not, but with a sudden hand  
 Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,  
 Which was like Cain's or Christ's—Oh! that it should be so!

## XXXV.

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?  
 Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?  
 What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,  
 In mockery of monumental stone,  
 The heavy heart heaving without a moan?  
 If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,  
 Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed one;  
 Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs  
 The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

## XXXVI.

Our Adonais has drunk poison — oh !  
 What deaf and, viperous murderer could crown  
 Life's early cup with such a draught of woe ?  
 The nameless worm would now itself disown :  
 It felt, yet could escape the magic tone  
 Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,  
 But what was howling in one breast alone,  
 Silent with expectation of the song,  
 Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

## XXXVII.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame !  
 Live ! fear no heavier chastisement from me,  
 Thou noteless blot on a remembered name !  
 But be thyself, and know thyself to be !  
 And ever at thy season be thou free  
 To spill the venom when thy fangs o'er flow :  
 Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee ;  
 Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,  
 And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt — as now.

## XXXVIII.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled  
 Far from these carrion kites that scream below ;  
 He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead ;  
 Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now, —  
 Dust to the dust ! but the pure spirit shall flow  
 Back to the burning fountain whence it came,  
 A portion of the Eternal, which must glow  
 Through time and change, unquenchably the same,  
 Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

## XXXIX.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep —  
 He hath awakened from the dream of life —  
 'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep  
 With phantoms an unprofitable strife,  
 And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife  
 Invulnerable nothings. — *We* decay  
 Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief  
 Convulse us and consume us day by day,  
 And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

## XL.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;  
 Envy and calumny and hate and pain,  
 And that unrest which men miscall delight,  
 Can touch him not and torture not again;  
 From the contagion of the world's slow stain  
 He is secure, and now can never mourn  
 A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain;  
 Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,  
 With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

## XLI.

He lives, he wakes — 'tis Death is dead, not he;  
 Mourn not for Adonais. — Thou young Dawn  
 Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee  
 The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;  
 Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!  
 Cease ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air  
 Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown  
 O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare  
 Even to the joyous stars which smile on it's despair!

## XLII.

He is made one with Nature : there is heard  
 His voice in all her music, from the moan  
 Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird ;  
 He is a presence to be felt and known  
 In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,  
 Spreading itself where'er that Power may move  
 Which has withdrawn his being to its own ;  
 Which wields the world with never wearied love,  
 Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

## XLIII.

He is a portion of the loveliness  
 Which once he made more lovely : he doth bear  
 His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress  
 Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there,  
 All new successions to the forms they wear ;  
 Torturing th'unwilling dross that checks it's flight  
 To it's own likeness, as each mass may bear ;  
 And bursting in it's beauty and it's might  
 From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

## XLIV.

The splendours of the firmament of time  
 May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not ;  
 Like stars to their appointed height they climb  
 And death is a low mist which cannot blot  
 The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought  
 Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,  
 And love and life contend in it, for what  
 Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there  
 And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.



## XLV.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown  
 Rose from thier thrones, built beyond mortal thought,  
 Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton  
 Rose pale, his solemn agony had not  
 Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought  
 And as he fell and as he lived and loved  
 Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,  
 Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved:  
 Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

## XLVI.

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark  
 But whose transmitted effluence cannot die  
 So long as fire outlives the parent spark,  
 Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.  
 "Thou art become as one of us", they cry,  
 "It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long  
 "Swung blind in unascended majesty,  
 "Silent alone amid an Heaven of song.  
 "Assume thy winged throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"

## XLVII.

Who mourns for Adonais? oh come forth  
 Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.  
 Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous earth;  
 As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light  
 Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might  
 Sate the void circumference: then shrink  
 Even to a point within our day and night;  
 And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink  
 When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

## XLVIII.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre  
 O, not of him, but of our joy : 'tis nought  
 That ages, empires, and religions there  
 Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought ;  
 For such as he can lend,— they borrow not  
 Glory from those who made the world their prey ;  
 And he is gathered to the kings of thought  
 Who waged contention with their time's decay,  
 And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

## XLIX.

Go thou to Rome, — at once the Paradise,  
 The grave, the city, and the wilderness ;  
 And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,  
 And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress  
 The bones of Desolation's nakedness  
 Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead  
 Thy footsteps to a slope of green access  
 Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead,  
 A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

## L.

And gray walls moulder round, on which dull Time  
 Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand ;  
 And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,  
 Pavilioning the dust of him who planned  
 This refuge for his memory, doth stand  
 Like flame transformed to marble ; and beneath,  
 A field is spread, on which a newer band  
 Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death  
 Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

## LI.

Here pause : these graves are all too young as yet  
 To have out grown the sorrow which consigned  
 Its charge to each ; and if the seal is set,  
 Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,  
 Break it not thou ! too surely shalt thou find  
 Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,  
 Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind  
 Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.  
 What Adonais is, why fear we to become ?

## LII.

The One remains, the many change and pass ;  
 Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly ;  
 Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity,  
 Until Death tramples it to fragments. — Die,  
 If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek !  
 Follow where all is fled ! — Rome's azure sky,  
 Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak  
 The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

## LIII.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart ?  
 Thy hopes are gone before : from all things here  
 They have departed ; thou shouldst now depart !  
 A light is past from the revolving year,  
 And man, and woman ; and what still is dear  
 Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.  
 The soft sky smiles, — the low wind whispers near :  
 'Tis Adonais calls ! oh, hasten thither,  
 No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

## LIV.

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,  
That Beauty in which all things work and move,  
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse  
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love  
Which through the web of being blindly wove  
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,  
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of  
The fire for which all thirst; now beams on me,  
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

## LV.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song  
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven,  
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng  
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;  
The massy earth and sphered skies are riven!  
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;  
Whilst burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,  
The soul of Adonais, like a star,  
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.



